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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5195
INFO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0806
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 0045
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE 7148
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0608
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT IMMEDIATE 3613

UNCLAS ANKARA 002383

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AFIN AMGT ASEC GM GR IZ JO OREP TU

SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR CODEL PENCE + 8 TO TRAVEL TO TURKEY MAY 7 - 8, 2006

REF: SECSTATE 66587

¶1. Embassy Ankara welcomes and grants country clearance to the House International Relations Committee Congressional Delegation led by Rep. Mike Pence and including Rep. Mike Ferguson, Rep. Lincoln Davis, Rep. Jim Costa, Professional Staff Members Sam Stratman, Alan Makovsky and Hillel Weinberg, and Military Assistants Col. Michael Deyoung and Maj. Cameron O'Neil for travel to Turkey May 7 and 8. The purpose of visit is to meet with Turkish political and military officials. Point of contact for the visit at Embassy Ankara is Deputy Political-Military Affairs Counselor, Maggie Nardi, who can be reached through the Embassy switchboard at 90-312-455-5555.

¶2. Hotel reservations have been confirmed in Ankara at the Sheraton Hotel for the night of May 7. Tel: 90-312-468-5454; fax: 90-312-467-1138. Confirmation numbers are 576951973, 586951973, 596951973, 616951973, 626951973, 636951973, 656951973, 356951985, and 806951987.

¶3. Visas: All Americans traveling to Turkey must have a valid visa. Travelers without a visa can obtain a visa valid for one entry/three months at port of entry upon payment of USD 30 fee. This fee is payable only in U.S. Dollars cash. There is no fee for official travel if the visa is obtained outside of Turkey.

¶4. Health safety: Information on vaccinations and other health precautions can be obtained from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline for International Travelers (tel: 1-877-394-8747; fax 1-800-CDC-FAXX, 1-800-232-3299; or via the Internet at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

¶5. Security Assessment: In the aftermath of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) there continues to be the potential for both transnational and indigenous terrorist groups to target U.S. interests in Turkey. After the Gulf War, the predecessor to the Turkish Terrorist Group Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) assassinated four Americans in Turkey and carried out numerous bombings of U.S. targets (mostly private sector businesses, although two rockets were directed toward the Consulate General in Istanbul). Subsequent to the ending of OIF hostilities, there have been isolated terrorist bombings attributed to DHKP/C and other indigenous terrorist groups in protest of OIF. Other Turkish terrorist groups with anti-Western sympathies include Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP) Turkish Communist Party/Marxist Leninist (TKP/ML), Turkish Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Army (TIKKO) and Islamic Greater Eastern Raiders/Front (IBDA/C). Al-Qaida threats to target U.S. bases in Turkey have been public knowledge for some time.

¶6. The Turkish National Police (TNP) is quite responsive in their role as protector of U.S. diplomatic and military interests in Turkey. The TNP has provided enhanced coverage at each of our facilities in Ankara, Istanbul, Adana and Izmir. Mission Turkey is confident the TNP will continue their high level of responsiveness for U.S. facilities. The incidence of crime, both violent and the more traditional tourist crimes (pick pocketing, purse-snatching, etc.), is relatively low throughout Turkey. Visitors to Istanbul should be aware that tourist-type crimes are more prevalent there, especially in the traditional tourist areas, such as Sultanahmet and Istiklal Caddesi. The security office encourages visitors to report any security incidents, including surveillance, to the RSO immediately.

Useful security information about Turkey is available on the following websites:

--Embassy Ankara: <HTTP://WWW.USEMB-ANKARA.ORG.TR> (Click on Security Matters)

--Consulate General Istanbul:
<HTTP://WWW.USCONSULATE-ISTANBUL.ORG.TR>

¶7. For further information regarding travel in Turkey consult the Consular Information Sheet. The Consular Information Sheet and public announcements are available on the internet at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

Other information is available on the following websites:

--The State Department Consular Affairs (ca) website:
<http://www.travel.state.gov/turkey.html>

--Turkish Daily News (English language Turkish newspaper):
<http://www.turkishdailynews.com>

--Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs:
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr>

--The Republic of Turkey home page:
<http://www.turkey/index.html>

--Weather for Turkey:
<http://www.wunderground.com/global/tu.html>

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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